



**PARAPROFESSIONAL
PERSONNEL
2023 - 2026**

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

AYER SHIRLEY REGIONAL SCHOOL

DISTRICT

AND

THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE,

COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES

(AFSCME)

AFL-CIO, STATE COUNCIL 93, LOCAL 1703

PARAPROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL

JULY 1, 2023 - JUNE 30, 2026

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**COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE AYER SHIRLEY
REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT AND THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF STATE,
COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO, STATE COUNCIL 93, LOCAL 1703**

Paraprofessionals Agreement

This Agreement entered into by the Ayer Shirley School Committee, hereinafter referred to as the Employer, and Local 1703, State Council 93, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO, hereinafter referred to as the Union, has as its purpose the promotion of harmonious relations between the Employer and the Union; the establishment of equitable and peaceful procedures for the resolution of differences; and the establishment of rates of pay, hours of work and conditions of employment.

Article I - Recognition

1. Subject to any applicable provisions of State or Federal Law or regulation now or hereafter in effect, the Employer recognizes the Union as the exclusive bargaining agent with respect to wages, hours and terms and conditions of employment for the following employees:

All paraprofessionals employed by the Ayer Shirley Regional School District, excluding, part-time (i.e., under twenty hours per week), casual or seasonal help, all employees performing duties only in ACP/extended day programs, and all other employees of the District.

2. This Agreement is a complete agreement between the parties for the term hereof covering all mandatory subjects of bargaining. All matters not dealt with herein shall be treated as having been brought up and disposed of and the Employer shall be under no obligation with the Union to make any modifications or additions to this Agreement, which is to be effective during the term thereof. In the event any changes are mutually agreed to between the Employer and the Union, on a voluntary basis, they will be reduced to writing, signed by the Employer and the Union representative and become addenda to this Agreement.
3. There shall be no discrimination, interference, restraint or coercion by the Employer, or the Union, or their respective agents, against any Employee because of membership or non-membership in the Union.



Article II - Union Dues and Agency Fees

1. The Employer agrees that, in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 180, Section 17, it will deduct membership dues, on a schedule mutually determined by the District and the Union, from the wages of any Employee in the unit who has voluntarily submitted a written authorization in the form set below. The dues will be remitted monthly in accordance with such authorization, provided that the Employer shall be under no obligation to make any such deduction as aforesaid after the termination of the term of this Agreement, and provided that the Employer may cease making such deductions at any time upon behalf of an Employee upon timely receipt by the Superintendent of Schools of a revocation of the authorization from the Employee.
2. The Union shall indemnify and save the Employer harmless against all claims, demands, suits or other forms of liability, which may arise by reason of any action taken in making deductions and remitting the same to the Union pursuant to this Section.
3. All Employees in the bargaining unit who are not members of the Union in good standing and who have been employed for thirty (30) days or more shall have the option to pay the Union an agency service fee to defray the costs of collective bargaining and contract administration, providing such members choose not to become members of the Union. The employer agrees to deduct from the pay of each non-Union member who voluntarily agrees, in the bargaining unit, all agency fees which are owed to the Union. The amount of the agency fee shall be an amount equal to eighty percent (80%) of the current Union dues.

Article III - Rights of the Committee

In recognition of the fact that the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts vest responsibility to the people of the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee for the general charge of school houses, and the efficient and economical operation of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District, it is herein agreed that except as specifically and directly modified by express language in a specific provision of this Agreement, the Employer retains all rights and powers that it has or may hereafter be granted by law in managing the School Department and directing the work force and may exercise the same at its discretion without any such exercise being made the subject of a grievance except as expressly provided herein.

Said rights and powers include but are in no way to be construed as limited to: the establishment of equal rules and regulations; the right to determine the extent to which work will be performed by members of the bargaining unit; the right to hire, fire, suspend, or in any other manner discipline for just cause; to classify, promote, demote, transfer permanently or temporarily; to determine hours for and the number of Employees required at any location; to determine the qualifications and competence of; to assign an added, lessened or different work or responsibility to; to set standards and requirements applicable to and make determination of the steps and eligibility for any in-step wage increases for; to make any pay deduction because of

absence, or failure to perform work by any Employee covered by this Agreement; and to introduce new or to change existing operational methods.

The above rights are reserved exclusively and solely as prerogatives of the Employer subject only to such limitations that are expressly provided for in this Agreement.

Article IV - Grievances

1. For the purposes of this Agreement, a grievance shall be defined as any complaint by any Employee covered by this Agreement that s/he has been subjected to a violation or misinterpretation of a specific provision of this Agreement.
2. The purpose of this procedure is to secure at the lowest possible administrative level, equitable solutions to the problems affecting the welfare of working conditions of the Employees. Both parties agree that these proceedings will be kept as informal and confidential as may be appropriate at any level of this procedure.
3. Nothing contained herein shall be construed as limiting the rights of any Employee having a complaint to discuss the matter informally with any appropriate member of the administration and to have the problem adjusted without intervention of the Union, provided, however, that any such adjustment shall be consistent with the terms of this Agreement. If the Employee so chooses, a representative of the Union may be present at the adjustment of the complaint. Only those unresolved complaints that directly relate to a violation or misinterpretation of a specific provision of this Agreement are subject to the grievance process.
4. Since it is important that the grievance be processed as rapidly as possible, the number of days indicated at each level should be considered as maximum. The time limits specified may be extended only by a prior express agreement of the respective parties or their representatives.
5. If the grievance has not been properly presented at Level One at the end of ten (10) working days following the occurrence of the grievance, then the grievance shall be deemed settled, or waived, and shall not be eligible for further action. Furthermore, if the grievant does not adhere to the time limits at each level of the grievance process, then the grievance shall be deemed settled, or waived, and shall not be eligible for further action.
6. If the Employer or Administrator fails to adhere to the time limits at any level in the grievance process, then the grievance shall be considered to be denied at that level, and the grievant may submit the grievance in writing, within the required time limit, to the appropriate Administrator at the next level in the process.
7. Subject to the foregoing provisions of this Article, all grievances must in all cases be processed in accordance with the levels, time limits, and conditions herein set forth:

Level One - Immediate Supervisor

The grievant shall present the grievance to the appropriate immediate supervisor within ten (10) working days of the occurrence of any grievance or the date of first knowledge of its occurrence by any party affected by it. The supervisor shall meet with the grievant within seven (7) working days of receipt of the written grievance. The supervisor shall render a decision to the grievant within seven (7) working days of the meeting.

Level Two - Superintendent of Schools

If the grievance has not been resolved at Level One to the satisfaction of the grievant, the grievant may appeal such decision in writing to the Superintendent within seven (7) working days of the Level One decision. The Superintendent shall meet with the grievant to discuss the allegations within seven (7) working days of receipt of the written appeal, and the Superintendent will render a written decision within seven (7) working days of the Level Two meeting.

Level Three - School Committee

If the grievance has not been resolved at Level Two to the satisfaction of the grievant, and only if the grievance does not relate to matters of discipline, evaluation, assignments, promotions, and work schedule, all of which are the responsibility of the Superintendent, the grievant may appeal such decision in writing to the School Committee within seven (7) working days of the receipt of the Level Two decision. The Committee and the grievant will meet for the purpose of resolving the grievance at the next regularly scheduled School Committee meeting, provided the grievance has been submitted to the Committee at least seven (7) working days prior to the next regularly scheduled School Committee meeting. Otherwise, the Committee will meet with the grievant at the regularly scheduled meeting next ensuing. Within fifteen (15) calendar days of said meeting, a written response will be sent to the grievant.

Level Four - Arbitration

If the grievance has not been resolved at Level Three, or at Level Two in the case of matters that are the responsibility of the Superintendent, to the satisfaction of the Union, the Union may present the grievance for arbitration to the American Arbitration Association for disposition in accordance with their rules within fifteen (15) calendar days of the Level Three (or, when applicable, Level Two) decision. The arbitrator's decision will be final, binding, and in writing and will set forth findings of fact, reasoning, and conclusions on the issues as submitted by the parties. The arbitrator is without authority to render a decision which requires the commission of an act prohibited by law or which violates the terms of this Agreement. All costs for the arbitrator shall be borne equally by the parties.

8. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary, no dispute or controversy shall be submitted for arbitration unless it involves the interpretation or application of a specific provision of this Agreement. The parties may, by mutual consent, submit more than one pending grievance to the same arbitrator.

Article V - Continuity of Employment

1. The Union agrees that during the term of this Agreement no Employee shall engage in, induce or encourage any strike, walkout, work stoppage, sit-down, slowdown, withholding of services, boycott (whether primary or secondary), or any other direct or indirect interference, concerted or otherwise, with the Employer's operations. The Employer agrees not to conduct a lockout.
2. The Employer may impose disciplinary action, including discharge, upon any and all of the Employees directly involved in a violation of this Article. Such action shall not be subject to the grievance or arbitration procedures hereunder except as to the question of whether or not the Employees who were disciplined, in fact, engaged in, induced or encouraged such conduct.

Article VI - Years of Service

1. For the purposes of this Article, years of service shall be considered the length of an Employee's continuous service in the Ayer Shirley Regional School District. Continuous service means the most recent period of unbroken service in the Ayer Shirley Regional School District, provided that authorized leave of absence, military service, or layoff because of lack of work, shall not be considered a break in continuous service.
2. All 52-week Employees of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District hired as of July 1, 2011, and all school-year employees hired as of August 29, 2011, who were employees of Ayer Public Schools or Shirley School District on June 30, 2011, shall have their continuous years of service with those school districts count as years of service with Ayer Shirley Regional School District. If employees worked part time, then their time will be prorated accordingly to apply toward their years of service.
3. All new employees hired after July 1, 2011, shall be subject to a probationary period of 12 months from the first day of work, and their employment may be terminated at any time during this period without cause. The contents of the personnel files of all employees previously employed by either Ayer Public Schools or Shirley School District shall officially be part of their personnel files with the Regional School District.
4. An Employee shall lose his/her years of continuous service for the following reasons:
 - a. S/he quits employment with the Ayer Shirley Regional School District.
 - b. His/her employment is terminated in accordance with Section 3 of this Article.
 - c. S/he is absent for three (3) consecutive working days without notifying the employer. Exceptions may be made only with the consent of the employer. After such absence, the employer will send written notification to the Employee at his/her last known address that s/he has lost his/her seniority, and that his/her employment has been terminated.
 - d. If s/he does not return to work when recalled from layoff and fails to notify the Employer of his/her intention to return to work within four (4) days of notice of recall, or fails to return to work within seven (7) calendar days. Exceptions shall be made only with the

- consent of the Superintendent.
- e. S/he is laid off for a period in excess of one (1) years.
 - f. S/he retires.
5. Assignments and transfers to positions shall be at the sole discretion of the Employer. In the event that an assignment becomes vacant or is created during the school year, it shall be posted internally for a minimum of five (5) business days. Postings will be disseminated to all employees via the District's email system, listed on the District website, and placed in every building in a conspicuous place where employees are likely to see them. Any Employee is free to apply for such an assignment. However, any decision with regard to filling such assignment shall be at the discretion of the Employer. Years of service shall be considered in the making of assignments, the filling of vacancies, and the transfer of employees, although it need not be the prevailing factor or the decisive factor in the ultimate assignment, filling of vacancy or transfer.
 6. In the event it becomes necessary to lay off Employees, the Employer will make such decisions as are in the best interests of the Ayer Shirley Regional School District and its operations. The principle of continuous service shall be considered when all other qualifications are equal.
 7. In recognition of dedicated service to the District and its students, Employees who retire pursuant to the provisions of the Middlesex County Retirement Act will receive a payment of the following gross amount if at the time of retirement, they have completed the requisite number of years of full-time service in the District.

<u>Years Completed</u>	<u>Gross Payment</u>
15-19	\$4,750
20-24	\$5,500
25 or more	\$6,250

Article VII - Classification and Pay Schedule

1. There shall be attached to and considered part of this Agreement a classification and pay schedule marked Appendix A – Paraprofessional Wage Scale. The Employer agrees to consult with the Union before any classifications as set forth in Appendix A are reclassified.
2. The salaries and wages of Employees shall be paid bi-weekly of the appropriate week. In the event this day is a holiday, the preceding day shall be the payday.
3. All Employees will be paid by direct deposit, unless, in the judgment of the Superintendent, there is a bona fide reason that makes it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for an Employee to be paid by direct deposit. Furthermore, any Employee who does not wish to receive a copy of his/her pay stub through the District's e-mail system must pick up the stub in person at the District's business office.

4. Employees required to use their car will be paid at the per mile rate established by the U.S. Government.
5. The Employer will furnish to the Union, on or before December 1 of each year, a list of the school, title, classification and wages of each Employee covered by this Agreement. The Employer will also furnish any changes that occur to the list throughout the year.
 - a. On December 1 of each school year, grant-funded employees will be made aware that their position is grant-funded. In association with Article VII, Section 5, the district will provide the Union with a list that identifies those Paraprofessionals whose positions are grant-funded. The district will provide employees covered under this section a reasonable period of time to review and return any documentation that is required to be signed for said grants.
6. Employees will be assigned primary areas of responsibility. However, Employees may be subject to temporary reassignments, in order to meet the needs of the school system. If the Employee is assigned to work in a higher classification for at least five (5) consecutive days, s/he shall, effective from the first day, be compensated at his/her own rate or the rate of the job, whichever is higher. In the event of a permanent reassignment, the affected Employee shall have the right to consult with the Superintendent or his designee and will be given the reasons for the reassignment.
7. A Paraprofessional who serves as a substitute teacher any day for a minimum of 45 minutes cumulatively, shall be paid an additional stipend as follows: \$40.00 for 45 minutes to 2.5 cumulative hours of substitution.
8. \$60.00 for more than 2.5 cumulative hours of substitution.
9. All paraprofessionals must meet the definition of "highly qualified" as defined below:
 - Completed two years of study at an institution of higher education; or
 - Obtained an associate's (or higher) degree; or
 - Have met a rigorous standard on one of the formal Massachusetts endorsed assessments: Parapro or WorkKeys.
 - Employees who do not meet "highly qualified" at the time of hire will be given up to one hundred eighty (180) days to meet the assessment criteria. Failure to do so may result in termination of employment.
10. To the extent possible, paraprofessionals shall be notified of their assignments for the following year by the end of the previous school year. In the event that notification is not possible, notification shall be made as soon as practicable. This provision is intended as a courtesy to paraprofessionals and does not in any way affect the rights of the employer with respect to assignments, the filling of vacancies and transfers as outlined in this Article and does not affect the probationary period provided for in this Article.

Article VIII - Union Representatives

1. A written list of Union stewards and other representatives shall be furnished to the Employer immediately after their designation and the Union shall notify the Employer of any changes.
2. Two (2) Employees of each bargaining unit designated by the Union shall be granted time off (not to exceed two (2) days per year) to attend meetings of state and national bodies without loss of pay.
3. Announcements shall be posted on bulletin boards in Employee work areas. Parties to this Agreement, both of who may use the bulletin boards for notices of routine nature, agree that it would be improper to post denunciatory or inflammatory written material on such bulletin boards and will not post such material.
4. The Employer agrees to permit representatives of American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO and/or Council 93, and/or Local 1703 to enter the premises at any time for individual discussion of working conditions with Employees, provided care is exercised by such representatives that they do not interfere with the performance of duties assigned to the Employees, and provided that notification is made and permission received from the building principal in advance of the intended presence of said representative.
5. The Union will have access to new hire(s) for up to one half (½) hour to discuss the Union and its benefits for the point of orienting new members.

Article IX - Holidays

1. Employees covered by this Agreement shall be paid at their regular rate for holidays as follows:
 - a. 23~24...Labor Day; Veterans Day; Thanksgiving Day; New Years Day (New)
 - b. 24~25... Labor Day; Veterans Day; Thanksgiving Day; New Years Day; Martin Luther King Jr. Day (New)
 - c. 25~26.... Labor Day; Columbus Day (New); Veterans Day; Thanksgiving Day; New Years Day; Martin Luther King Jr. Day
2. Holidays are observed on the same day the District observes. Should the holiday fall on a Saturday, the District observes on Friday. Should the holiday fall on a Sunday, the District observes on Monday.

Article X - Vacations

Not applicable to this Agreement

Article XI - Sick Leave

1. Each Employee shall be credited with paid sick leave at the rate of twelve (12) days per year. (Year- round employees hired after July 1 and school-year employees hired after the beginning of the school year will have their sick leave prorated based upon the number of actual days of work remaining in the year.) Unused sick leave shall accumulate to a maximum of one hundred ninety (190) days for 12-month Employees, one hundred seventy (170) days for Employees who work more than 200 days per year, and one hundred fifty (150) days for all other Employees. Extensions, with or without pay, beyond stated sick leave may be granted in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools. Such leaves of absence shall not exceed one (1) year. Notification of the amount of sick leave shall be provided to each Employee at the beginning of each year of the Agreement.

Each eligible unit employee may convert 1 (one) accrued sick day per year to a "flex" day which can be used at the discretion of the employee for unpaid school vacation days, unpaid holidays or unpaid snow days. Flex days will be deducted from the employees accrued sick leave balance and will be paid out at the end of the fiscal year if not used. Flex days will not accrue from year to year.

2. The Superintendent may require a certificate from a registered physician in cases of illness or accident, which certificate shall state the cause of absence, and that in the opinion of the physician, absence from duty was necessary. Any such request for a certificate shall not be made unreasonably. Such certificate shall be submitted in all absences in excess of five consecutive (5) days.

Article XII - Personal Leave

1. In each school year, up to three (3) days of paid leave may be utilized for imperative personal business or legal obligations, which could not effectively be conducted outside of school hours. Each year, unused personal days shall be counted towards the Employee's maximum allowable accumulated sick leave.
2. Reason for such leave must be made in writing to the Building Administrator as early as possible and not less than seventy-two (72) hours before such absence occurs whenever possible. No request for personal leave will be submitted so as to extend a holiday or vacation period.
3. If the Superintendent believes the purpose of the leave is not of a nature specified above requiring the absence of the Employee during working hours, then s/he may decline to pay for such leave. The matter may, however, be presented through the grievance and arbitration procedures if the Employee so elects.

4. Nothing in this section shall preclude the Superintendent from granting additional personal leave with or without pay for reasons, which s/he deems urgent.

Article XIII - Bereavement Leave

1. All bargaining unit employees shall be allowed up to five (5) consecutive days leave during the fiscal year, in any case of death in the immediate family. The term "immediate family" means the Employee's spouse, child, father, mother, sister, brother, mother-in-law, father-in-law, step parents, step child, significant other, and if the employee is the sole provider for other family members. (Must provide proof of guardianship or power of attorney).
2. Bereavement leave up to three (3) working days will be granted to an employee in the event of a death for grandparents, aunts, uncles, sisters-in-law, brothers-in-law, nieces, and nephews.

Article XIV - Military Leave

1. The Employer will comply with all State and Federal laws with respect to mandatory military leave of absence.
2. Employees who are required to perform short-term (2 weeks or less) active duty for training will do so during the months of July or August except when the necessity of the Government makes other demands absolutely necessary. In such instances they will be granted necessary unpaid leave; however, in the event the total earnings of the Employee, including compensation for actual work performed for the Ayer Shirley Regional School District and compensation for such military service is less than his/her regular compensation, the Employer agrees to pay the Employee the difference between this actual weekly earnings and what s/he would have earned if s/he had performed such number of hours of work for the School District.
3. Military leave without pay will be granted to any Employee who goes on extended active duty, is inducted or who enlists for one required term in any branch of the armed services of the United States or during the period of any involuntary extension of enlistment.
4. Upon return from such leave, an Employee will be placed on the salary schedule at the level, which s/he would have achieved had s/he remained actively employed in the system during the period of absence, up to a maximum of four (4) years. Such absence shall be applicable in the case of an Employee's years of service.

Article XV - Jury Duty

1. In the event that any Employee covered by this Agreement is required to perform and does perform jury service, the Employee will suffer no loss of pay, provided that the Employee will

pay to the Ayer Shirley Regional School District any compensation for jury duty received from the Court, with the exception of reimbursement for travel.

2. As a condition of receiving payment from the District, the Employee agrees that, if during jury service s/he is discharged for the day during regular working hours, s/he will report to work.
3. An Employee performing such jury service who desires the benefit of this Article shall be required to present weekly to the School Department, a certificate signed by the Clerk of Court or other proof reasonably satisfactory to the Committee as to the time spent by the Employee in such jury service during the week and the amount of compensation received thereafter.

Article XVI - Family Medical/Paternal/Child-Rearing Leave

Section 1 - Family/Medical Leave ("FMLA" Leave)

1. Any full-time Employee who has been employed for at least one (1) year or more shall be entitled to family medical leave of up to twelve (12) weeks during each year:
 - a. To care for a son or daughter within a year of birth, adoption or the initiation of foster care;
 - b. To care for a spouse, child or parent suffering from a serious health condition;
 - c. Because the Employee's own serious health condition makes the Employee unable to perform the functions of his/her position.
2. Family/Medical leave is unpaid except that the Employee may use paid leave for an equivalent amount of unpaid leave, depending upon the reasons for the Employee's leave. The types of paid leave Employees may use include sick leave when FMLA leave is due to the Employee's serious health condition or that of a spouse, child, or parent.
3. During unpaid family/medical leave, Employees shall be entitled to participate in all medical, dental and other insurance plans at the same rate of contribution as may be in effect for all Employees.
4. At the end of the leave, Employees shall be returned to the same positions they held before the leave began, or to an equivalent position, subject to the availability of such positions.
5. Application procedure:
 - a. Except for emergencies, Employees shall apply to the Superintendent at least thirty (30) days before the start of the leave period.
 - b. The Employee shall indicate the anticipated date of return to active employment.
 - c. Employees may be required to produce reasonable medical and other certification of the need for family/medical leave within fifteen (15) days of requesting leave. The District may require the Employee to submit medical recertification during leave at thirty (30) day intervals and it may require Employees to report periodically on their status and intent to return to work. As a condition for returning to work, an Employee who has



been on family/medical leave may be required to present medical certification that s/he is able to resume work.

6. Leave entitlements under State Law and FMLA run concurrently when both laws cover the same type of leave.

Section 2 - Parental Leave

Upon receipt of at least two (2) weeks written notice of an Employee's date of departure and intention to return, an Employee who has been employed for at least three (3) months shall be granted a Parental Leave without pay of up to eight (8) weeks in accordance with the provisions of G.L. c.149 Section 105D. Parental Leave under this provision will be granted for:

- i. The birth of the employee's child;
- ii. The placement of a child under the age of eighteen (18), or under the age of twenty-three (23) if the child is mentally or physically disabled; with the employee for adoption.

Except to the extent covered by Sick Leave as set forth below, said leave will be without pay.

1. An Employee who is pregnant and is physically unable to work due to disability connected to pregnancy or childbirth may use accumulated sick leave to cover those days the Employee is disabled and unable to work. The District may require this individual to submit medical evidence verifying the disability.
2. This leave may be extended by mutual agreement between the Employee and the Superintendent in order that an Employee who has been on FMLA/Parental Leave may return at an appropriate time in consideration of the student's program(s) (such as the beginning of a semester, beginning of a marking term, or after a vacation period), or when absence due to medical complication resulting from the pregnancy extends beyond the eight (8) weeks in Subsection (a) above.
3. During unpaid FMLA/Parental Leave, employees shall be entitled to participate in all medical, dental and other insurance plans. If both parents are employees of the district, they are entitled to a combined eight (8) weeks of leave. At the end of the leave, employees shall be returned to the same positions they held before the leave began, or to an equivalent position, subject to layoff or other position elimination.
4. Where an employee is eligible for both Parental Leave and FMLA Leave, said leaves will run concurrently.

Section 3 - Child Rearing Leave

In the event that an Employee desires a leave longer than that provided by statute, the procedure listed below shall be followed:

1. Under normal conditions, the Superintendent shall be notified in writing not later than the beginning of the fourth (4th) month of pregnancy. The request must be accompanied by a physician's certification stating the expected date of delivery.

2. Said Child Rearing Leave shall be without pay and shall terminate one (1) year from September 1 following the birth of the child, or sooner, if the Employee and the Committee so agree. Extensions of leave may be granted at the discretion of the Superintendent.
3. The Employee must notify the Superintendent by the 1st of March of the year in which the Child Rearing Leave expires of the individual's intention to return in September, apply for an extension, or to retire from the school system. Failure to comply with this requirement will be considered as a resignation from the school system. Upon return from such leave, the Employee will be assigned to any school where a vacancy occurs in as comparable a position as possible.
4. In the event the Employee has continued in the duties under the contract through February 1 of the school year in which the leave was granted, s/he would be credited with a step on the Salary Schedule upon return from leave.
5. In the event the child does not live, the Employee may make a written application for reinstatement, accompanied by a physician's statement of good health. Such reinstatement may be granted by the Superintendent if an acceptable vacancy exists.

Section 4 - Adoption Leave

An Employee who adopts a child shall be granted leave as follows:

1. The Employee shall be entitled to a leave of absence without pay upon proper notification to the Superintendent at least two (2) months in advance of the date the leave is to begin, if possible.
2. Said leave of absence shall not exceed one (1) year. Extensions of leave may be granted at the discretion of the Superintendent.
3. An Employee upon returning to the system shall be entitled to all the benefits, rights and privileges of the preceding sections of this Article.

Section 5 - Small Necessities Leave

The parties agree to comply with the terms of the Small Necessities Leave Act, G.L. c. 149 s.52D.

Article XVII - Other Leaves

1. Additional leaves of absence with or without pay may be granted at the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools.
2. All benefits to which an Employee was entitled at the time any such leave commenced, including unused accumulated sick leave, will be restored to the Employee's account upon



return from leave. It is recognized that no specific position can be held open during any leave, but in all instances every effort will be made to assign the Employee to a vacant position substantially equivalent to the one held at the time the leave commenced.

3. The Employee will notify the Superintendent three (3) months prior to the termination of his/her leave of his/her intention to return. All requests for extensions or renewals of leaves must be applied for in writing three (3) months prior to the termination date. Decisions on such requests will be confirmed in writing within thirty (30) days after receipt of request.

Article XVIII - Insurance

1. As long as the Ayer Shirley Regional School District agrees to pay a portion of the cost of health and life insurance plans currently in effect, the District will deduct the Employee's share (25% for health, 50% for \$10,000 basic term life insurance) from payroll checks from participating members upon receipt of proper authorization.
2. All regular employees are required by law to be members of the County Retirement System. The School Committee agrees to make the appropriate deduction on the salaries of all eligible members.
3. Employees may voluntarily agree to participate in the District's group dental and long-term disability plans by having 100% of the premium costs deducted from their payroll checks.

Article XIX - Workers' Compensation

1. Employees who receive a personal injury arising out of and in the course of their employment will participate in the Workers' Compensation program for medical treatment and lost wages, in accordance with state law, and will fully cooperate in providing timely and complete information, including attendance at scheduled medical examinations.
2. During the period that an Employee is being paid by the Workers' Compensation program, the District will pay the difference between the amount of Workers' Compensation and the Employee's regular pay to the extent that the Employee has earned sick leave. Only that portion of wages paid by the District will be chargeable against the Employee's accumulated sick leave.
3. In instances where accumulated sick leave is exhausted, the Employee will only receive the Workers' Compensation benefits.
4. In cases of personal injury to an Employee sustained as a result of and in the performance of his/her duties, the Superintendent's office will notify the County Retirement Board as required by General Laws Chapter 32, Section 7, and will provide a copy of such notification to the Employee.

5. If a question exists as to whether an Employee is entitled to compensation under the Workers' Compensation Act, it is agreed that pending resolution of said question, the Employee may draw sick leave benefits. The Employee shall reimburse the Committee for any such grant of sick leave if s/he receives Workers' Compensation benefits for the same period. The Employee's sick leave accumulation shall be re-credited for any such reimbursement.

Article XX - Tax-Sheltered Annuities

1. In order to provide for non-forfeitable tax sheltered annuity payable upon retirement or termination of employment, an Employee may contract with the Committee pursuant to Section 37B of Chapter 71 of the General Laws of Massachusetts for purchase of such annuity as part of his/her employment compensation.
2. Such contract shall specify the premiums to be paid toward the annuity and the benefits payable there under.

Article XXI - Personnel Records

1. A copy of any written statement or report which is of a critical or unsatisfactory nature concerning an Employee, made by a member of management or by a designated supervisor, which is to be retained by the Employer in the Employee's personnel file, shall be shown to the Employee who shall certify in writing that s/he has read it. If the Employee refuses to sign such a statement, the supervisor or other person in whose presence the Employee read the statement or report shall certify that the statement or report was read by the Employee and that the Employee refused the statement acknowledging this fact. If the Employee is not available (due to illness or other absence) at the time the statement or report is prepared, the member of management or supervisor shall file with the statement or report the reason for not showing the statement or report to the Employee at the time of filing, but the Employee shall be given the opportunity to read the report as soon as s/he is available thereafter.
2. The Employee will have the right to submit a written answer to such material and his/her answer shall be reviewed by the Superintendent and attached to the file copy.
3. The contents of the personnel files of all employees previously employed by either Ayer Public Schools or Shirley School District shall officially be part of their personnel files with the Regional School District.

Article XXII - Separability and Savings

If any Article or Section of this Agreement, or any riders thereto, should be held invalid by



operation of law, or by any other tribunal of competent jurisdiction, or if the compliance with, or enforcement of, any Article or Section should be restrained by such tribunal pending a final determination as to its validity, the remainder of this Agreement and if any rider thereto, or the application of such Article or Section to persons or circumstances other than those as to which it has been held invalid, or as to which compliance with, or enforcement of, has been restrained shall not be affected thereby.

Article XXIII - Duration

1. The signing of this Contract by the authorized representatives of the Union and the Employer shall constitute the effective date of this Contract for all items except wages, which shall be effective on July 1, 2023.
2. This Contract shall remain in full force and effect from its effective date through June 30, 2026, and from year to year thereafter unless either party notifies the other party prior to January 1st of the final year thereafter, of its desire to terminate or modify this Contract. Such notification shall be by registered United States mail to the responsible signatories of this Contract.

Article XXIV - Hours of Work and Overtime

1. Generally, the expected workday for full-time paraprofessionals shall be 6.5 hours per day, with a five-day workweek. The Employer reserves the right to reduce or increase such hours upon ten-days' notice to the employees affected when such notice is practicable.
2. The workday and workweek for paraprofessionals working from 20 to less than 32.5 hours per week shall be those established by the Building Administrator or Superintendent.
3. The Paraprofessional work year will equal the number of student academic days plus 2 Professional Development days. Paraprofessionals shall be required by the District to work their regular hours on any Ninety (90) minute early-release days designated as "Professional Development" by the District. Furthermore, the District reserves the right to re-assign some of the hours available on early-release days to be worked at another time (such as a full professional-development day), consistent with the educational goals of the District. On those early-release days when Paraprofessionals are not required to work their full schedule (such as conference and exam days), they may, at their discretion and with five (5) school days advance notice provided to the building principal, choose to work (and be paid for) their full schedule, performing job related duties assigned by the principal.
4. Paraprofessionals will be paid for their regular hours on the day before Thanksgiving, winter break, and on the last day of the school year, even if school is dismissed early.
5. Overtime shall be paid when an Employee works in excess of forty hours in a workweek. For



the purposes of determining overtime hours, time paid for vacation, personal, holiday, bereavement, and jury leave shall be treated as hours worked.

6. In the event of inclement weather, or other unforeseen circumstances, resulting in the delay of the opening of school, paraprofessionals are expected to report to work as soon as they can safely do so and as close to their normal starting time as possible. In such a case, the paraprofessional will be compensated for their normal work hours for that day. In the event that school is closed early for inclement weather, or other unforeseen circumstance, and paraprofessionals are released from work early, they will be compensated for their normal work hours for that day.

Article XXV - Evaluations

1. An Employee's performance evaluation shall be completed every other year by his/her supervisor. Such evaluation will be recorded in writing on the form attached hereto as Appendix C and shall be made on the basis of the following criteria:
 - a. Meeting the Needs of Students
 - b. Work Habits
 - c. Work Attitudes
 - d. Relationships with Others
 - e. Contribution to School Environment
2. Each Employee shall receive a written copy of his/her evaluation no later than ten (10) days after the evaluation is completed. He/she shall be entitled to discuss the evaluation with the Principal/ Director and, if requested, with the Superintendent of Schools. The Employee may submit a written statement, which will be attached to his/her evaluation, within ten (10) days after s/he receives a copy of the evaluation.
3. The Superintendent's Office shall receive a copy of all evaluations and shall retain such evaluations, together with any recommendations made on the basis of any such evaluation, and any evidence or materials submitted in support of such evaluation, in the respective personnel file of each Employee.

Article XXVI - Professional Development

1. Paraprofessionals shall be allowed to participate in professional-development activities provided by the District, space permitting. It is understood that time spent in professional-development activities outside the Paraprofessional's working hours shall be unpaid time, unless the paraprofessional is required by the District to attend such activities.
2. It is the intent of the District to provide in-service professional-development opportunities that will improve the knowledge and skills of Paraprofessionals to the benefit of the students whom

they support.

Article XXVII - Specialized Training

1. Paraprofessionals who are identified to serve as school wide or district wide resources to assist in ensuring proper Safety Care Training of students as a condition of their position shall:
 - a. Complete an initial in depth training of requisite hours within the first month of the school year, or if hired after the start of the school year, within one month.
 - b. Thereafter, complete an annual refresher training to reinforce practices and procedures.
 - c. Receive an hourly differential of \$.60/hr. upon successful completion of training, to be included in their regular biweekly earnings.
 - d. All training hours outside of regular work hours will be paid by the District at the employee's hourly rate.

2. Paraprofessionals who are not certified to perform Safety Care Procedures on a student shall not perform any type of student Safety Care Procedures.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Employer has caused this instrument to be duly executed by its authorized designees and the Union acting in behalf of the Employees has caused this instrument to be signed by its proper officers hereunto duly authorized the day and year first above written:

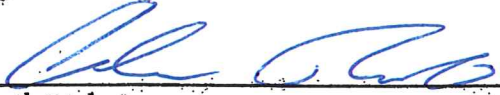
Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee



Chairperson

1/9/2024

Date



Superintendent

Date

AFSCME, AFL-CIO, State Council 93, Local 1703



AFSCME Union Representative

Dec 18, 2023

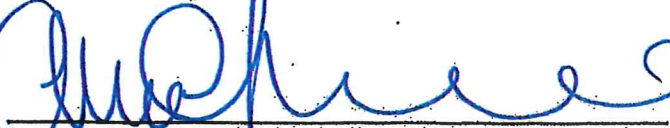
Date



Paraprofessional Union Chairperson

12-18-23

Date



Negotiations Committee Representative



Negotiations Committee Representative


Negotiations Committee Representative


Negotiations Committee Representative

Appendix A – Wage Scale

PARAPROFESSIONAL STAFF

Wage Scale

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2026

	FY 24		FY 25		FY 26
1	\$ 16.69	1	\$ 17.19	1	\$ 17.71
2	\$ 17.02	2	\$ 17.53	2	\$ 18.06
3	\$ 17.57	3	\$ 18.10	3	\$ 18.64
4	\$ 18.25	4	\$ 18.80	4	\$ 19.36
5	\$ 18.93	5	\$ 19.50	5	\$ 20.08
6	\$ 19.67	6	\$ 20.26	6	\$ 20.87
7	\$ 20.41	7	\$ 21.02	7	\$ 21.65
8	\$ 21.20	8	\$ 21.84	8	\$ 22.49
9	\$ 22.01	9	\$ 22.67	9	\$ 23.35
10	\$ 22.86	10	\$ 23.55	10	\$ 24.25

2023-2024: 0.85 Cent Increase on scale; employees “Above Top Step” receive 0.85 Cent Increase.

2024-2025: 3% Increase on scale; employees “Above Top Step” receive 3% Increase.

2025-2026: 3% Increase on scale; employees “Above Top Step” receive 3% Increase.

Employees Above Top Step

1. Employees who have already advanced to “above top step” status shall receive a fixed percentage increase over the previous year’s hourly rate. However, if the addition of this fixed percentage increase would result in an hourly rate which is less than the hourly rate for the appropriate top step, the employee will be placed back onto the salary schedule at the top step and will not return to “above top step” status in the future.
2. No new employees will advance to “above top step” after the 2020-2021 school year.



Appendix B - Memorandum of Understanding

The District recognizes that the school calendar can sometimes make it difficult for employees to meet their obligations for the deduction of medical and other benefit premiums due to variations in the number of hours worked from one payroll to the next. Prior to the end of each school year, the Superintendent and appropriate Business Office staff will meet jointly with the Chairpersons of the Paraprofessional, Clerical, and Food Service bargaining units to review the ensuing school year's calendar and payroll schedule and to determine the appropriate number and dates of the payrolls from which medical and other benefit deductions will be withheld. The District agrees to furnish to the unit Chairpersons the ensuing school year calendar and any financial documents (e.g., premiums) that would pertain to facilitating this meeting. Every reasonable effort will be made to have these bargaining units on the same schedule of payroll deductions or, at the very least, to minimize the schedule variation among the units. Decisions reached during this process will be in effect for all members of the bargaining unit for the ensuing school year. It is further acknowledged that highly unusual circumstances arising during a particular school year may cause reconsideration of the previously approved schedule of payroll deductions. In the event that the parties are unable to reach agreement, the District shall make the final decision regarding the schedule of payroll deductions for the year.



Appendix C - Evaluation



Ayer Shirley Regional School District

Ayer Shirley Regional School District Paraprofessional Evaluation Report

NAME: _____ BUILDING: _____

DATE: _____ POSITION: _____

SUPERVISOR: _____ REVIEW DATE: _____

4 - Exceeds Standard	3 - Meets Standard	2 - Needs Improvement	1 - Does not meet Standard
Knowledge and skill levels are substantially above those required for effective job performance. Employee keeps abreast of new developments and applies them on the job, always seeking to improve performance effectiveness.	Employee uses expected levels of knowledge and skills for effective performance of all responsibilities. Keeps abreast of new developments.	Knowledge and skill used by the employee in performing the job do not consistently meet job requirements. Employee needs to improve skills and knowledge to continue in this job.	Employee does not possess or use knowledge and skills necessary to meet current job requirements.

Meeting the Needs of the Students

		4	3	2	1
1.	Treats students in a pleasant, positive, respectful manner.				
2.	Fosters students independence by recognizing when to give help and when to encourage self help using problem solving skills and strategies.				
3.	Listens to and communicates with students.				
4.	Monitors the environment to maintain overall safety.				

Work Habits

		4	3	2	1
1.	Attends work regularly				
2.	Observes established working hours				

BM

3.	Demonstrates ability to work without immediate supervision				
4.	Complies with school policies, procedures, rules and regulations, and health and safety protocols				

Work Attitudes

		4	3	2	1
1.	Endeavors to improve work techniques				
2.	Accepts new ideas or procedures				
3.	Accepts constructive criticism and suggestions				
4.	Accepts responsibility				
5.	Exercises judgement				
6.	Adapts quickly to changing situations				

Relationships with Others

		4	3	2	1
1.	Works well and cooperates with co-workers, supervisor, and administration				
2.	Communicates and works effectively with classroom teacher				
3.	Communicates and works effectively with administration				
4.	Observes established channels of communication				

Contribution to School Environment

		4	3	2	1
1.	Participates in professional development activities				
2.	Maintains confidentiality in all settings relating to student and staff issues				
3.	Adheres to classroom, school and district policies and procedures in maintaining a safe and healthy learning environment				
4.	Maintains professional boundaries with parents/guardians				
5.	Maintains professional boundaries with students				

Performance Appraisal Summary

		4	3	2	1
1.	Meeting the Needs of the Students				
2.	Work Habits				
3.	Work Attitudes				
4.	Relationships with Others				
5.	Contribution to School Environment				

Overall Job Evaluation:

(Check appropriate rating and provide comments)

4 - Outstanding 3 - Satisfactory 2 - Needs Improvement 1 - Unsatisfactory

Comments:

Employee's Strengths: _____

Areas for Growth: _____

Evaluator Comments: _____

Employee Comments: _____

Evaluator's Signature

Date

Employee's Signature

Date

Employee signature indicates receipt of evaluation. Signature does not indicate agreement with evaluation. Employee may attach additional comments.

****Please return signed to Evaluator**

SIDE LETTER OF AGREEMENT
Between the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee
and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
AFL-CIO, State Council 93, Local 1703
Paraprofessional Personnel

October 16, 2023

This Side Letter of Agreement is entered into by and between the Ayer Shirley Regional School Committee ("the School Committee") and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), which consists of the AFL-CIO, State Council 93, Local 1703 (Paraprofessional Personnel).

WHEREAS, the School Committee and the Paraprofessional Personnel (together, "the Parties") are parties to a collective bargaining agreement covering the time period July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2026 ("the Contract"); and,

Due to the lack of language regarding the implementation of the negotiated Para Wage Scale for the contract duration of July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2026. We agree to expand the language following the Para Wage Scale to clarify the process.

1. APPENDIX A - PARA WAGE SCALE (remains as agreed upon)

FY 24		FY 25		FY 26	
1	\$ 16.69	1	\$ 17.19	1	\$ 17.71
2	\$ 17.02	2	\$ 17.53	2	\$ 18.06
3	\$ 17.57	3	\$ 18.10	3	\$ 18.64
4	\$ 18.25	4	\$ 18.80	4	\$ 19.36
5	\$ 18.93	5	\$ 19.50	5	\$ 20.08
6	\$ 19.67	6	\$ 20.26	6	\$ 20.87
7	\$ 20.41	7	\$ 21.02	7	\$ 21.65
8	\$ 21.20	8	\$ 21.84	8	\$ 22.49
9	\$ 22.01	9	\$ 22.67	9	\$ 23.35
10	\$ 22.86	10	\$ 23.55	10	\$ 24.25

2. NOW THEREFORE, the Parties hereby agree as follows:

2023-2024: 0.85 Cent Increase all Para Wage Scale employees, no Step. "Above Top Step" receive 0.85 Cent Increase.

2024-2025: 3% Increase all Para Wage Scale employees with Step; "Above Top Step" employees receive 3% Increase.

2025-2026: 3% Increase all Para Wage Scale employees with Step; "Above Top Step" employees receive 3% Increase.

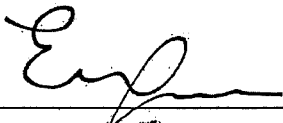
3. In consideration of this language clarification, the parties agree to add one additional flex day for each eligible employee for a total of two flex days for the 2023-2024 school year. Flex days will revert back to one per year for each eligible employee for the duration of this agreement.

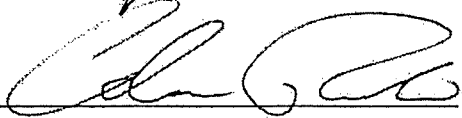
4. Except as modified by Paragraph 2 &3, all other terms of the Contract will remain unchanged and remain in full force and effect.


WHEREFORE, Intending to be bound, the parties have executed this agreement this 27th day of October, 2023.

For the Ayer Shirley Regional School

Committee:







For the AFSCME, AFL-CIO, State Council

93, Local 1703:

